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Gustav to regain hurricane status

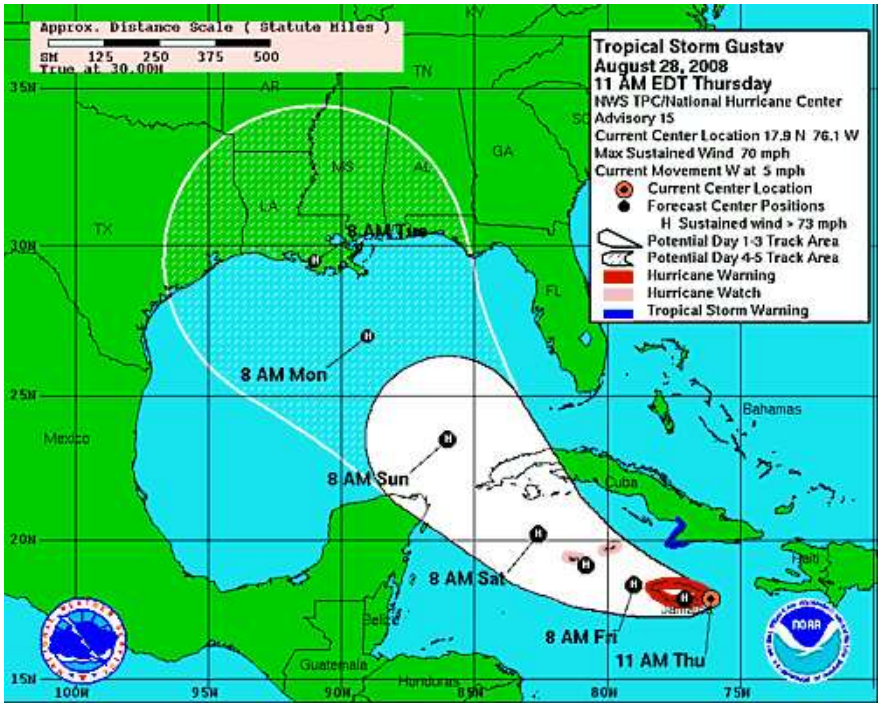
29 August 2008

Jamaica remains on alert as tropical storm Gustav moves westwards over the south coast during the next 24 hours. Winds are currently around 50 m.p.h. with higher speed gusts. Gustav is expected to regain its hurricane status once it moves away to the west, with wind speeds predicted to increase to over 100 m.p.h.

Torrential rain of between 6 to 12 inches is expected over eastern Cuba, Jamaica and the Cayman Islands, with isolated maximum amounts of 25 inches possible. These rains are likely to produce life-threatening flash floods and mud slides. On windward coasts storm surge flooding of 1 to 2 feet above normal tide levels can be expected along with large and battering waves.

The Met Office provides valuable forecast information to humanitarian agencies and the insurance industry, through the Tropical Storm Risk (TSR) service. Met Office models predict the paths of tropical storms such as Gustav, giving advanced notice for mitigating action. The probability of heavy rain and strong winds in association with tropical cyclones throughout the world form another crucial part of the TSR service.

The latest forecast track from the National Hurricane Center is shown below.



Notes

- The Met Office is providing forecast information on the progress of Gustav to government departments to help deal with the situation. The Foreign and Commonwealth Office and the Department for International Development (DFID) are responsible for issuing advice to British Nationals in the area.

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